Executive Council

Annual Report
2016-17

Alberta
Government

Note to Readers:
Copies of the annual report are available on the Executive Council website
www.alberta.ca/ministry-of-executive-council.aspx

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Executive Council

2016-17 Annual Report

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Preface

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 21 ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta contains ministers' accountability statements, the consolidated financial statements of the province and the *Measuring Up* report, which compares actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's strategic plan.

This annual report of the Ministry of Executive Council contains the minister's accountability statement, the audited financial statements of the ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This ministry annual report also includes:

*** other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*, either as separate reports or as a part of the financial statements, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report.**

Premier's Accountability Statement

The ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2017, was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at June 6, 2017 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in the preparation of this report.

Original signed by

Honourable Rachel Notley
Premier and President of Executive Council

Message from the Premier

As Premier, I am pleased to be the minister responsible for Executive Council – the department that provides support to government ministries to ensure that programs, services, agencies and outcomes are coordinated, aligned with the commitments our government has made to Albertans, and – above all – help make life better for people.

Albertans want us to create good jobs, protect health care and education, and make life more affordable. We are working to do exactly that, while at the same time keeping overall taxes on families the lowest in Canada and providing careful and responsible management of Alberta public finances.

Executive Council oversees the decision-making process of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees, supports the implementation of those decisions and communicates them to make sure Albertans know how our government is working on their behalf, and how they can get more information.

That work includes cutting school fees by 25%, building badly needed schools across Alberta, as well as a new hospital in Edmonton, a Cancer Centre in Calgary, new personal care homes and modernized and expanded health services across the province. We are also creating jobs, attracting new investment and growing our economy. Our Petrochemicals Diversification Program has attracted nearly $6 billion in new, private sector investment, which will result in thousands of construction jobs, hundreds of operational jobs and a more diversified economy. What's more are our efforts to make life more affordable for people: increasing minimum wage, freezing tuition, capping electricity rates, banning door-to-door energy sales and helping people and families lower their energy bills with support for new household energy efficiency products. We are also working to better help women and families trying to escape domestic violence, as well as working to provide clean, fresh drinking water to Indigenous communities and increasing affordable housing for families in need.

Our department of Executive Council and the Alberta Public Service are where our efforts to create jobs, protect public services and make life more affordable take shape, where those plans get translated into action, and where we work every day to make life better for Albertans.

Original signed by

Rachel Notley
Premier

Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The Ministry of Executive Council includes the department of Executive Council.

The executives of the ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the ministry. Collectively, the executives ensure the ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and strategic plan, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the financial statements and performance results for the ministry rests with the Premier, President of Executive Council. Under the direction of the Premier, I oversee the preparation of the ministry's annual report, including financial statements and performance results. The financial statements and the performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The performance measures are prepared in accordance with the following criteria:

- Reliability – information used in applying performance measure methodologies agrees with the underlying source data for the current and prior years' results.
- Understandability – the performance measure methodologies and results are presented clearly.
- Comparability – the methodologies for performance measure preparation are applied consistently for the current and prior years' results.
- Completeness – outcomes, performance measures and related targets match those included in the ministry's Budget 2016.

As deputy minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I am responsible for the ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money;
- provide information to manage and report on performance;
- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under ministry administration;
- provide Executive Council, the President of Treasury Board, Minister of Finance and the Premier, President of Executive Council the information needed to fulfill their responsibilities; and
- facilitate preparation of ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executives within the ministry.

Original signed by

Marcia Nelson
Deputy Minister of Executive Council
June 6, 2017

Results Analysis

Ministry Overview

Executive Council supports the implementation and execution of government policy by coordinating the decision-making processes of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees, managing the submissions and proposals of government ministries and agencies, and providing effective strategic planning and coordinated policy development across government.

The ministry provides leadership to the Alberta Public Service, coordinated communication with Albertans, and advances Alberta's intergovernmental priorities in Canada and beyond.

The Ministry of Executive Council reports to the president of Executive Council, the Premier, through the Deputy Minister of Executive Council.

Office of the Premier

The Office of the Premier encapsulates both strategic and functional support for the Premier. It includes advisors and planners, specialists in issues management and scheduling, media relations, stakeholder outreach and legislative liaisons. The Office is led by the Chief of Staff who, attentive to the Government caucus, is a crucial link in applying the principle of responsible government to the Ministry of Executive Council.

Deputy Minister's Office

The Deputy Minister, as Clerk of Executive Council, oversees the Ministry. The Deputy Minister's Office provides procedural and organizational advice to the Office of the Premier, and delivers policy and priority direction from the Office of the Premier to the Department of Executive Council. The Deputy Minister also serves as Secretary to Cabinet and the head of the Alberta Public Service.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

The Ministry of Executive Council provides administrative and functional support to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to enable the Vice Regal to focus on duties to represent the Sovereign and ensure the smooth functioning of our Parliamentary system.

Cabinet Coordination and Corporate Services

The Cabinet Coordination and Corporate Services division is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Executive Council. The division is comprised of the following major entities:

- **Cabinet Coordination Office** (CCO) is responsible for organizational and administrative support to Cabinet and its key committees as well as advice on committee governance, structures and functions. CCO provides strategic agenda setting and development, facilitating information flow to decision makers, recording minutes and communicating meeting outcomes.

- **Operations and Machinery of Government** (OMG) monitors and tracks the progress and implementation of policy, programs, and projects, across government, through shared data, the production of situation reports, and issues management. OMG also delivers advice on the structure and function of government.

- **Protocol Office** supports state, official, working and private visits to Alberta. Internally, the Protocol Office leads domestic ceremonies, including swearing-in of Cabinet, management of Government House, the Federal Building and McDougal Centre. Protocol also provides secretarial support to the Alberta Order of Excellence - the highest honour the province can bestow on a citizen. By serving as the point of introduction for diplomats and other key visitors, the Alberta Protocol Office enhances Alberta's profile on the global stage.

- **Corporate Services** supports the day-to-day operations of the ministry. This area provides

    - Human Resources support in the areas of recruitment, training and employee relations;
    - Finance and Administration services including financial planning, financial reporting and business planning;
    - Oversight of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy office;
    - Records management; and
    - Information and technology support and services.

Policy Coordination Office

Policy Coordination Office (PCO) works in partnership with the Cabinet Coordination Office to support delivery of the government's policy and legislative agenda. Working with the Premier's Office, PCO assists in the coordination of the government's annual legislative and other Throne Speech priorities. PCO works in partnership with all ministries to develop policy options to align to government's agenda and coordinates the system to review and approve government regulations. Overall, PCO plays an essential challenge function for ministries to ensure high-quality decision documents are provided to Cabinet and its Committees.

Intergovernmental Relations

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) coordinates Alberta's leadership and participation within the Canadian federation, in pursuit of a federal system that best serves the needs of Albertans and Canadians.

IGR is responsible for supporting the Premier's intergovernmental agenda, missions and meetings. This includes advancing Alberta's interests at intergovernmental forums, including the Council of the Federation, First Ministers' Meetings, the Western Premiers' Conference, and bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister or other Premiers.

IGR works with other Alberta government ministries to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to intergovernmental relations. IGR also reviews and approves all of Alberta's intergovernmental agreements to ensure they are consistent with Alberta's goals and objectives.

Public Affairs Bureau

The Public Affairs Bureau provides strategic guidance to Communications branches across the Government to coordinate a single, comprehensive narrative for Albertans. It is the point of coordination between the communications branches of government departments and the Premier's Office to align announcements with the government agenda.

It provides to Government departments all central services integral to efficient and effective delivery of communications, from social media channels to press releases. The Bureau can advise on and deliver the most effective medium of communication for the message and audience dictated by its client

departments. It provides a host of support services to amplify government messages to the public, such as:

- scheduling;
- technical support;
- writing and editing;
- advertising;
- graphics and photography;
- correspondence writers;
- speech writers; and
- social media content creators.

The Bureau provides an 'open mic' feed of worldwide social and mainstream media commentary relevant to the government for every department to provide to its staff and elected officials. This ensures the voices of those served are always available to be heard. The Bureau also provides mechanisms to gather public input such as:

- Media monitoring;
- Social media monitoring; and
- Public opinion polling.

Finally, the department provides a common coordinating function for communications during significant public emergency situations and manages the Government's corporate identity standards and style.

Risk Management Update

In the 2016-19 Business Plan, Executive Council identified a risk to its outcomes from potential deviance from policy or priority direction among partner Government of Alberta Ministries or within other jurisdictions of influence on Government of Alberta. Executive Council continues to seek to mitigate the risk through vigorous and proactive communication of Government priorities, and active engagement of Albertans on policy development, such that potentially incongruent activity is easily identifiable and apparent.

The Department also identified a risk of decreased effectiveness of its communication methods due to changing trends or technology. PCO and CCO employ relationship-building endeavours throughout and across ministries to help minimize the risk of discordant initiatives developing momentum before emerging to disrupt policy objectives, while Intergovernmental Relations maintains a vigilance and diplomatic contacts to identified external contra-influencers on behalf of the Government of Alberta. The Public Affairs Bureau adapts internal processes and structures to respond to developing trends and technologies in communications.

Discussion and Analysis of Results

1. The government's agenda and decision-making are supported and implemented

Executive Council has a crucial role to play in supporting the strategic planning, policy development and decision-making functions necessary to advance government's agenda on behalf of Albertans. Key activities and initiatives related to this outcome include:

- The Policy Coordination Office provided policy advice to support delivery of the government's policy and legislative agenda. Key outcomes for 2016-17 include:
    - Provided secretariat services to 115 meetings of five Cabinet Committees. These services include preparing Committee chairs; coordinating agendas and decision documents for Committee consideration; and working with Cabinet Coordination Office to produce official meeting records;
    - Supported 34 pieces of legislation between Spring and Fall Sessions in 2016;
    - Achieved an average of about 1,200 monthly staff visits to the Policy InSite website – a Government of Alberta staff tool designed to increase policy professionals' understanding of the Cabinet policy development and approval process.

- Cabinet Coordination Office (CCO) supported government by providing advice on the structure and function of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees. CCO also facilitated timely and effective government decision-making through its operational and logistical support to Cabinet and its Committees. Key outcomes for 2016-17 include:
    - Providing support to 54 Cabinet meetings. These services include preparing the Premier as chair, coordinating agendas and decision documents and producing official meeting records. Cabinet meetings supported decisions that lead to 34 pieces of legislation affecting ministries across the Government of Alberta.
    - Facilitated the establishment of the Wood Buffalo Ministerial Task Force in response to the wildfires that affected Albertans. Cabinet Coordination supported 18 meetings of the Task Force. This important work enabled the Task Force to fulfill its role of defining, coordinating and leading, in collaboration with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and affected Indigenous communities, a comprehensive, long-term recovery strategy to respond to the impact of wildfires in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.
    - Continuing to refine scheduling, agenda tracking and other tools and services in support of an effective and efficient Cabinet process.

- The Operations and Machinery of Government unit worked with ministries to support the timely and coordinated implementation of priorities, programs and major projects. It also provided research and analytical support for structural changes that aligned departmental responsibilities with government's priorities.

The branches of Policy Coordination Office, Cabinet Coordination Office, and Operations and Machinery of Government work closely with each other and individual Government of Alberta ministries to support implementation of the government's priorities. Collectively, these three branches measure success by how effectively they are able to support ministries' preparation of policy proposals and the Cabinet decision-making process.

These branches play a significant "challenge function" with respect to the assessment of Government of Alberta ministries' work so that ministries are prepared to respond to and address potential questions and concerns raised by elected officials.

Performance Measure 1.a	Target 2016-17	Actual
Satisfaction of ministries with the services they receive from Executive Council.	90%	82%
Performance Measure 1.b		
Satisfaction of ministries with communications and support services from Executive Council.	95%	75%

2. Alberta's policy interests within Canada are advanced

Intergovernmental Relations

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR), as part of Executive Council, leads the coordination of Alberta's economic, resource, environmental, social, and fiscal policies and activities as they relate to other governments within Canada. IGR works with other ministries across the Government of Alberta to develop collaborative approaches and expand multilateral and bilateral partnerships.

In 2016-2017, IGR supported the Premier, Ministers, and Deputy Ministers at more than 185 multilateral and bilateral meetings and conferences. Establishing and maintaining open lines of dialogue is an important part of building a solid foundation for sound relationships with other jurisdictions in Canada. These meetings facilitated progress for Alberta's policy objectives on a range of issues including energy, energy infrastructure, climate change, healthcare, education, Indigenous issues, and immigration.

Premier Notley participates in intergovernmental forums such as First Ministers' Meetings, the Council of the Federation, and the Western Premiers' Conference. In order to effectively support the Premier, IGR provided policy advice and strategic analysis throughout the year in order to advance Alberta's interests within Canada. Key meetings supported by IGR included:

- Council of the Federation - The Council of the Federation is comprised of all 13 provincial and territorial governments in Canada. Its objectives are to promote interprovincial-territorial cooperation, foster meaningful relations between governments, and demonstrate leadership on issues important to all Canadians. Alberta will host the 2017 Council of the Federation summer meeting, and preparations are underway.

  In July 2016, the Premiers met in Whitehorse, Yukon, and discussed a range of issues economic and social issues, including economic growth, responsible energy development, health care sustainability, and disaster response and recovery. A key outcome of this meeting was that Premiers reached an agreement in principle on a new Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA). The completed agreement was signed by trade ministers on April 7, 2017. The CFTA will promote trade, investment and labour mobility across provincial and territorial boundaries, as part of a broader economic vision for Canada.

- Western Premiers' Conference - The Western Premiers' Conference encourages collaboration on important issues shared by the western provinces and territories: Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. During the May 2016 conference in Vancouver, BC, Premiers discussed how to strengthen the economy and position the West to remain globally competitive. They found shared interests on energy and resource development, climate action, Indigenous relations, immigration and international trade.

- First Ministers' Meetings - In December, 2016, the Prime Minister and Premiers met and adopted the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change following the commitments made in the Vancouver Declaration of March 2016. The Framework builds on the existing work Alberta is undertaking as part of its Climate Leadership Plan, and collaboration with other jurisdictions will leverage this action into greater outcomes for all Canadians.

- Bilateral Meetings with Prime Minister Trudeau - Premier Notley had several bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Trudeau:

    - In April 2016, the Premier was invited to speak at the Federal Cabinet Retreat in Kananaskis, and held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister. During these meetings, market access, infrastructure, and employment insurance were key discussion topics.

    - In May 2016, following the Fort McMurray wildfires, the Prime Minister came to Alberta. This was an opportunity to discuss recovery efforts, and the Prime Minister also announced the expansion of employment insurance benefits to Edmonton area residents.

    - In November 2016, the Premier met with the Prime Minister in Ottawa for the announcement that the federal government had approved the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline and Enbridge's Line 3.

The ministry also works with other Alberta government ministries to ensure a coordinated and consistent provincial approach to intergovernmental relations across the Government of Alberta. This includes advancing Alberta's intergovernmental objectives by providing support, strategic advice and coordination to all ministries during various federal-provincial-territorial meetings of Ministers and Deputy Ministers. The ministry also facilitates internal discussions on cross-ministry issues, hosts regular intergovernmental sessions to share information and best practices, and provides up-to-date intelligence and briefings to staff across the government on developments across the country.

Lastly, under Section 11 of the *Government Organization Act*, the Minister of Executive Council is responsible for approving all of Alberta's intergovernmental agreements. Under the Act, the Minister also has a coordination role and an option to participate in any intergovernmental negotiations. The coordination role ensures Alberta has a consistent and coherent approach with other governments. In 2016-17, Intergovernmental Relations approved 238 agreements between the Government of Alberta and other governments that proceeded to signature.

This support to ministries is a key performance measure for Executive Council and the results of the most recent client survey are reported in the table below. The support and collaboration provided through the activities noted above have contributed to achieving our ministry's outcome; this work ensures the outcomes achieved through intergovernmental meetings and agreements support the work of ministries and Alberta's policy objectives.

Performance Measure 2.a	Target 2016-17	Actual
Satisfaction of ministries with the services they receive from Executive Council to advance Alberta's interests within Canada	90%	88%

Alberta Protocol Office

The Alberta Protocol Office has a key role in supporting intergovernmental relations nationally and internationally by supporting high-profile incoming missions. Examples from 2016-17 include:

- Official visits to Alberta were made by eighteen Heads of Mission, which included visits by Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Consuls General, Consuls and other foreign government dignitaries.
- The Ambassador of the United States of America paid a courtesy call on Premier in Calgary in early April 2016.
- The Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Alberta, and her Royal Highness travelled to Fort McMurray to view the devastation and loss caused by the wildfires.
- The then Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban-Ki Moon paid a visit to Alberta in August of 2016. He met with government officials, as well as a Syrian refugee family now residing in Alberta having escaped the horrors of the war in Syria.
- Alberta Protocol took the lead on planning the state memorials for former Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Norman Kwong and former Premier, the Honourable Jim Prentice.

Alberta remains an innovative and vibrant province with diverse opportunities that continue to be of interest to many countries.

3. Albertans receive clear and coordinated government communications

In 2016-17, Public Affairs Bureau made significant efforts to inform Albertans about important programs and services they can benefit from. The $464,000 Alberta Jobs Plan campaign promoted new tools of economic development introduced by government, like the Alberta Investor Tax Credit and the Capital Investment Tax Credit. The Public Affairs Bureau also ran a campaign on the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan. Advertising was seen on television, radio, in movie theatre, on online and through household direct mailing. This campaign reached more than 95% of Albertans and contained information about energy efficiency programs, the approval of two pipelines and improved market access. In a changing economy, many Albertans are worried about the future and the future of their children. The $1-million Future Ready advertising campaign shared government programs and initiatives to ensure Albertans are ready for success in a future global economy. All of these campaigns included important information that helped ensure Albertans knew about important new programs they could access.

In the same time, circumstance quite out of any human control – the Fort McMurray Fire – thrust the province into a different kind of worldwide spotlight. This disaster commanded the full resources of the Public Affairs Bureau.

In 2016-17, news releases issued by the Public Affairs Bureau regularly hit 30,000 to 50,000 views, with one recording an astonishing 700,000, while page views of the alberta.ca website numbered 10.5 million. Facebook and Twitter impressions of posts by the YourAlberta channel of the Public Affairs Bureau are estimated in the 20 million range, with 27,000 (Facebook) and 90,000 (Twitter) direct followers respectively. Communications efforts facilitated by the Bureau achieved direct contact with unprecedented numbers of Albertans, such as the 161,000 participants on the 16 Telephone Townhalls 630,000 hits on the emergency response webpage in the month of May and 400,000 reads of the government's daily information bulletin.

Activities of the Public Affairs Bureau cited above represent the "deliverables" of communications products by the Bureau and, to the extent possible, the number of Alberta consumers of those products. The performance measure of "satisfaction with" assumes that the degree to which the Bureau is a reliable and consistent source of government information is reflected in a measure of how satisfied the public is with that information.

Performance Measure 3.a	**Target 2016-17**	**Actual**
Public satisfaction with government communications.	75%	61%
Performance Measure 3.b		
Public satisfaction with the government of Alberta home page.	90%	80%

Nearly 40% of respondents polled in a random survey to take this performance measure suggested that they had neither heard nor receive any information about provincial government activities or programs in the preceding year. However only about 30% of respondents said they had not accessed the Government of Alberta website in the past year. That result suggests that the rigour of the polling methodology may not be as effective as the Bureau requires to make adequate analysis of initiatives likely to achieve significant improvement.

Executive Council is working on a new - and more effective - set of performance measures that will more properly reflect both internal as well as public interactions with Executive Council.

Data Sources and Methodology

1. The Government's agenda and decision making are supported and implemented

Performance Measures:

1.a "Satisfaction of ministries with the services they receive from Executive Council."

1.b "Satisfaction of ministries with communications and support services they receive from Executive Council."

Source and Methodology:

Satisfaction of Policy Coordination Office Clients with Products and Services

From December 8 to 22, 2016 a survey was conducted of clients of the Policy Coordination Office. A total of 171 clients, which included Executive Team members from each ministry and selected other ministry staff who had direct contact with the Policy Coordination Office, were invited to participate in the web-based survey. An overall participation rate of 72% was achieved with 124 clients responding. Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the products or services they had received over the past year by choosing from "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". Results represent the total of "very" and "somewhat satisfied" responses.

Satisfaction of Cabinet Coordination Office Clients with Products and Services

From December 8 to 22, 2016 a survey was conducted of clients of the Cabinet Coordination Office. A total of 69 clients, which included Executive Team members from each ministry and selected other ministry staff who had direct contact with the Cabinet Coordination Office, were invited to participate in the web-based survey. Twenty-seven clients responded, for an overall participation rate of 39%. Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the products or services they had received over the past year by choosing from "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". Results represent the total of "very" and "somewhat satisfied" responses.

2. Alberta's policy interests within Canada are advanced

Performance Measures:

2.a "Percentage of related program areas within government satisfied with services to advance Alberta's interests within Canada."

Source and Methodology:

Satisfaction of Intergovernmental Relations Clients with Products and Services

From December 8 to 22, 2016 a survey was conducted of clients of the Intergovernmental Relations branch. A total of 197 clients, which included Executive Team members from each ministry and selected other ministry staff that have direct contact with the Intergovernmental Relations, were invited to participate in the web-based survey. One hundred and twenty-four clients responded, for an overall participation rate of 63%. Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the products or services they had received over the past year by choosing from "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied",

"somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". Results represent the total of "very" and "somewhat satisfied" responses.

3. Albertans receive clear and coordinated government communications

Performance Measures:

3.a "Public Satisfaction with Government Communications."
3.b "Public Satisfaction with Government of Alberta Home Page."

Source and Methodology:

Public Satisfaction with Government Communications

2016-17 results reflect telephone interviews with 1,000 adult Albertans conducted from December 8 to 16, 2016. Respondents were randomly selected from across the province. Respondents were first asked whether they had heard or received any information about provincial government activities or programs. The 616 who answered "yes" were then asked to choose from "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". Figures shown reflect the averaged results of multiple questions. "No" response replies are not included in the calculation of results. A sample of this size within the given population produces results that are reliable to within plus or minus 3.1%. Results represent the total of "very" and "generally satisfied" responses.

Public Satisfaction with Government of Alberta Home Page

2016-17 results reflect telephone interviews with 1,000 adult Albertans conducted from December 8 to 16, 2016. Respondents were randomly selected from across the province. Respondents were first asked whether they had visited the Alberta government website in the past year. The 648 respondents who answered "yes" were then asked how useful they found the first page in helping them to locate the information they needed by choosing from "very useful", "somewhat useful", "not very useful" or "not at all useful". "No" response replies are not included in the calculation of results. The margin of error on the sample of 648 is plus or minus 3.1% at the 95% confidence level. Results represent the total of "very" and "somewhat useful" responses.

Executive Council

Financial Statements
March 31, 2017

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Independent Auditor's Report

AUDITOR GENERAL *Alberta*

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly

Report on the Financial Statements

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Ministry of Executive Council, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2017, and the statements of operations, change in net debt and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Ministry of Executive Council as at March 31, 2017, and the results of its operations, its changes in net debt and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Original signed by Merwan N. Saher FCPA, FCA

Auditor General

June 6, 2017

Edmonton, Alberta

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2016 Actual (Restated) (Note 3)
		(in thousands)	
Revenues			
Premiums, Fees and Licences	$ -	$ 4	$ 3
Other	-	9	8
	-	13	11
Expenses - Directly Incurred (Note 2(b) and Schedules 1, 2, 4 and 5)			
Programs			
Office of the Premier / Executive Council	15,739	15,676	15,682
Intergovernmental Relations	4,193	3,475	3,282
Public Affairs	6,935	6,677	6,172
	26,867	25,828	25,136
Annual Deficit	$ (26,867)	$ (25,815)	$ (25,125)

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at March 31, 2017

	2017	2016 (Restated) (Note 3)
	(in thousands)	
Financial Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$ 14	$ 4
Accounts Receivable	1	12
	15	16
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities (Note 4)	3,368	3,080
Net Debt	(3,353)	(3,064)
Non-Financial Assets		
Tangible Capital Assets (Note 5)	119	179
Prepaid Expenses	5	-
	124	179
Net Liabilities	$ (3,229)	$ (2,885)
Net Liabilities at Beginning of Year	$ (2,885)	$ (2,306)
Annual Deficit	(25,815)	(25,125)
Net Financing Provided from General Revenues	25,471	24,546
Net Liabilities at End of Year	$ (3,229)	$ (2,885)

Contingent Liabilities and Contractual Obligations (Notes 6 and 7).

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN NET DEBT
Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2016 Actual (Restated) (Note 3)
		(in thousands)	
Annual Deficit	$ (26,867)	$ (25,815)	$ (25,125)
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets (Note 5)	60	60	59
Change in Prepaid Expenses		(5)	-
Net Financing Provided from General Revenue		25,471	24,546
Increase in Net Debt		$ (289)	$ (520)
Net Debt at Beginning of Year		(3,064)	(2,544)
Net Debt at End of Year		$ (3,353)	$ (3,064)

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016 (Restated) (Note 3)
	(in thousands)	
Operating Transactions		
Annual Deficit	$ (25,815)	$ (25,125)
Non-cash Items Included in Net Operating Results		
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets (Note 5)	60	59
	(25,755)	(25,066)
(Increase) Decrease in Accounts Receivable	11	(9)
Increase in Prepaid Expenses	(5)	-
Increase in Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	288	521
Cash Applied to Operating Transactions	(25,461)	(24,554)
Capital Transactions		
Acquisition of Tangible Capital Assets (Note 5)	-	-
Cash Applied to Capital Transactions	-	-
Financing Transactions		
Net Financing Provided from General Revenues	25,471	24,546
Cash Provided by Financing Transactions	25,471	24,546
Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	10	(8)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at Beginning of Year	4	12
Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of Year	$ 14	$ 4

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2017

NOTE 1 AUTHORITY

The Ministry of Executive Council (the ministry) operates under the authority of the *Government Organization Act*, Chapter G-10, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

(a) Reporting Entity

The reporting entity is the Ministry of Executive Council.

All departments of the Government of Alberta operate within the General Revenue Fund (the Fund). The Fund is administered by the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance. All cash receipts of departments are deposited into the Fund and all cash disbursements made by departments are paid from the Fund. Net financing provided from general revenues is the difference between all cash receipts and all cash disbursements made.

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting

Revenue

All revenues are reported on the accrual basis of accounting.

Expenses

Directly Incurred
Directly incurred expenses are those costs the ministry has primary responsibility and accountability for, as reflected in the government's budget documents.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES (Cont'd)

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting (Cont'd)

In addition to program operating expenses such as salaries, supplies, etc., directly incurred expenses also include:

- amortization of tangible capital assets,
- pension costs, which are the cost of employer contributions for current service of employees during the year, and
- valuation adjustments which include changes in the valuation allowances used to reflect financial assets at their net recoverable or other appropriate value. Valuation adjustments also represent the change in management's estimate of future payments arising from obligations relating to vacation pay, guarantees and indemnities.

Incurred by Others

Services contributed by related other entities in support of the ministry's operations are not recognized and are disclosed in Schedule 4 and allocated to programs in Schedule 5.

Valuation of Financial Assets and Liabilities

Fair value is the amount of consideration agreed upon in an arm's length transaction between knowledgeable, willing parties who are under no compulsion to act.

The fair values of cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities are estimated to approximate their carrying values because of the short term nature of these instruments

Financial Assets

Financial assets are assets that could be used to discharge existing liabilities or finance future operations and are not for consumption in the normal course of operations.

Financial assets of the ministry are limited to financial claims, such as receivables from other organizations, employees and other individuals.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES (Cont'd)

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting (Cont'd)

Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable are recognized at the lower of cost or net recoverable value. A valuation allowance is recognized when recovery is uncertain.

Liabilities

Liabilities are present obligations of a government to others arising from past transactions or events, the settlement of which is expected to result in the future sacrifice of economic benefits.

Non-Financial Assets

Non-financial assets are acquired, constructed or developed assets that do not normally provide resources to discharge existing liabilities, but instead:

(a) are normally employed to deliver government services;
(b) may be consumed in the normal course of operations; and
(c) are not for sale in the normal course of operations.

Non-financial assets of the ministry are limited to tangible capital assets and prepaid expenses.

Tangible Capital Assets

Tangible capital assets of the ministry are recognized at historical cost and amortized on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The threshold for capitalizing new systems development is $250,000 and the threshold for major systems enhancements is $100,000. The threshold for all other tangible capital assets is $5,000.

Amortization is only charged when the tangible capital asset is put into service.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES (Cont'd)

(c) Future Accounting Changes

The Public Sector Accounting Board has issued the following accounting standards:

- **PS 2200 Related Party Disclosures and PS 3420 Inter-Entity Transactions (effective April 1, 2017)**
  PS 2200 defines a related party and establishes disclosures required for related party transactions. PS 3420 establishes standards on how to account for and report transactions between public sector entities that comprise a government's reporting entity from both a provider and recipient perspective.

- **PS 3210 Assets, PS 3320 Contingent Assets, and PS 3380 Contractual Rights (effective April 1, 2017)**
  PS 3210 provides guidance for applying the definition of assets set out in Financial Statement Concepts, Section PS 1000, and establishes general disclosure standards for assets; PS 3320 defines and establishes disclosure standards on contingent assets; PS 3380 defines and establishes disclosure standards on contractual rights.

- **PS 3430 Restructuring Transactions (effective April 1, 2018)**
  This standard provides guidance on how to account for and report restructuring transactions by both transferors and recipients of assets and/or liabilities, together with related program or operating responsibilities.

- **PS 3450 Financial Instruments (effective April 1, 2019)**
  Adoption of this standard requires corresponding adoption of PS 2601 Foreign Currency Translation, PS 1201 Financial Statement Presentation, and PS 3041 Portfolio Investments in the same fiscal period. These standards provide guidance on: recognition, measurement and disclosure of financial instruments; standards on how to account for and report transactions that are denominated in a foreign currency; general reporting principles and standards for the disclosure of information in financial statements; and how to account for and report portfolio investments. The ministry has not yet adopted this standard and has the option of adopting it in fiscal year 2019-20 or earlier.

Management is currently assessing the impact of these standards on the financial statements.

NOTE 3 PROGRAM TRANSFER/GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION

(in thousands)

Program Transfer

Effective April 1, 2016, responsibility for the Regulatory Review Secretariat was transferred to the ministry from the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance.

Effective April 1, 2016, funding for Intergovernmental Relations program support was transferred to the ministry from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

Comparatives for 2016 have been restated as if the ministry had always been assigned with its current responsibilities. A $727 increase to the published expenses has been recorded to reflect these transfers.

NOTE 4 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

(in thousands)

	2017	2016
Accounts Payable	$ 428	$ 206
Other Accrued Liabilities	2,940	2,874
	$ 3,368	$ 3,080

NOTE 5 TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

(in thousands)

	Computer Software	
	2017 Total	2016 Total
Estimated Useful life	5 years	
Historical Cost		
Beginning of Year	$ 298	$ 298
Disposals	-	-
	$ 298	$ 298
Accumulated Amortization		
Beginning of Year	119	60
Amortization Expense	60	59
	179	119
Net Book Value at March 31, 2017	$ 119	
Net Book Value at March 31, 2016		$ 179

NOTE 6 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

(in thousands)

The ministry is not involved in any legal matters where damages are being sought. The ministry has not been named in any legal claims (2016 - no claims).

NOTE 7 CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

(in thousands)

Contractual obligations are obligations of the ministry to others that will become liabilities in the future when the terms of those contracts or agreements are met.

	2017	2016
Obligations under contracts	$ -	$ 167

NOTE 8 BENEFIT PLANS

(in thousands)

The ministry participates in the multi-employer pension plans: Management Employees Pension Plan, Public Service Pension Plan and Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers. The expense for these pension plans is equivalent to the annual contributions of $3,141 for the year ended March 31, 2017 (2016 – $2,785). Ministries are not responsible for future funding of the plan deficit other than through contribution increases.

At December 31, 2016, the Management Employees Pension Plan reported a surplus $402,033 (2015 – surplus $299,051), the Public Service Pension Plan reported a surplus of $302,975 (2015 – deficiency $133,188) and the Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers reported a deficiency of $50,020 (2015 – deficiency $16,305).

The ministry also participates in two multi-employer Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plans. At March 31, 2017, the Bargaining Unit Plan reported a surplus of $101,515 (2016 – surplus $83,006) and the Management, Opted Out and Excluded Plan a surplus of $31,439 (2016– surplus $29,246). The expense for these two plans is limited to the employer's annual contributions for the year.

NOTE 9 PAYMENTS BASED ON AGREEMENT
(in thousands)

The ministry has entered into agreements to coordinate services that are proportionately funded by all ministries of the Government of Alberta. The ministry pays service providers for services rendered under the agreements and apportions the expenses to the ministries. Costs under these agreements are incurred by the ministry under authority in Section 25 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

The agreements cover the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat costs and government-wide corporate communications costs.

Amounts paid and payable under agreements are as follows:

	2017	2016
Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat	$ 236	$ 243
Corporate Communications	770	1,234
	$ 1,006	$ 1,477

NOTE 10 COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain 2016 figures have been reclassified to conform to the 2017 presentation.

NOTE 11 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The deputy minister and the senior financial officer approve these financial statements.

Schedule 1

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
EXPENSES - DIRECTLY INCURRED DETAILED BY OBJECT
Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017		2016
	Budget	Actual	Actual (Restated)
	(in thousands)		
Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits	$ 23,540	$ 23,104	$ 21,422
Supplies and Services	3,187	2,541	2,914
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	60	60	59
Financial Transactions and Other (1)	80	123	741
	$ 26,867	$ 25,828	$ 25,136

(1) Includes statutory salaries and valuation adjustments

Schedule 2

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
LAPSE/ENCUMBRANCE
Year ended March 31, 2017

	Voted Estimate [1]	Adjusted Voted Estimate	Voted Actuals [2]	Unexpended (Over Expended)
		(in thousands)		
Program - Operating Expense				
Office of the Premier/Executive Council				
1.1 Office of the Premier / Executive Council	$ 12,381	$ -	$ 12,513	$ (132)
1.2 Office of the Lieutenant Governor	626		593	33
1.3 Corporate Services	2,672		2,516	156
	15,679	-	15,622	57
Intergovernmental Relations				
2 Intergovernmental Relations	4,193		3,416	777
	4,193	-	3,416	777
Public Affairs				
3 Public Affairs	6,935		6,687	248
	6,935	-	6,687	248
Total	$ 26,807	$ -	$ 25,725	$ 1,082
Lapse/(Encumbrance)				$ 1,082

(1) As per "Expense Vote by Program" page of 2016-17 Government Estimates.

(2) Actuals exclude non-voted amounts such as amortization and valuation adjustments.

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SALARY AND BENEFITS DISCLOSURE
Year ended March 31, 2017

	2017				2016
	Base Salary [1]	Other Cash Benefits [2]	Other Non-cash Benefits [3]	Total	Total
Senior Officials					
Deputy Minister [3] [4] [5]	$ 358,721	$ 11,547	$ 88,011	$ 458,279	$ 445,482
Associate Deputy Minister [3] [4] [6]	304,976	50,578	75,906	431,460	327,863
Deputy Minister, Policy Coordination [3] [7]	286,977	8,000	73,796	368,773	397,316
Associate Deputy Minister, Intergovernmental Relations [3]	265,861	30,200	53,419	349,480	56,073
Deputy Secretary to Cabinet [3] [4] [8]	211,235	31	54,577	265,843	302,105
Managing Director, Public Affairs Bureau [3] [4] [9]	208,908	29,898	36,728	275,534	272,483
Office of the Premier					
Chief of Staff [10]	264,342	28,011	28,095	320,448	265,651
Deputy Chief of Staff [11]	195,000	-	49,167	244,167	324,153
Principal Secretary [12] [13]	158,391	-	40,421	198,812	-
Executive Director, Southern Alberta Office [14]	47,816	-	13,545	61,361	-
Director, Communications and Press Secretary to the Premier	150,000	21,205	7,039	178,244	156,567
Director, Issues Management [15]	149,694	15,893	15,056	180,643	176,446
Executives					
Assistant Deputy Minister, Intergovernmental Relations [16]	96,506	-	25,232	121,738	226,280
Assistant Deputy Minister, Social Policy, Policy Coordination Office [17]	58,065	-	16,084	74,149	187,871
Assistant Deputy Minister, Community Policy and Regulations Coordination [18]	152,811	-	40,834	193,645	117,930
Assistant Deputy Minister, Economic Policy, Policy Coordination Office [19]	133,216	-	36,853	170,069	227,155
Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Communications-Economic [20]	182,620	7,950	47,598	238,168	232,167
Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Communications-Social [21]	190,227	18,827	49,659	258,713	241,910
Chief of Protocol	152,000	20,841	40,138	212,979	193,089
Executive Director, Corporate Services [22]	146,167	-	39,148	185,315	65,260
Executive Director, Human Resources	144,537	350	28,177	173,064	78,554

(1) Base salary includes regular salary and earnings such as acting pay.
(2) Other cash benefits include vacation payouts, lump sum payments and overtime. There were no bonuses paid in 2017.
(3) Other non-cash benefits include government's share of all employee benefits and contributions or payments made on behalf of employees including pension, supplementary retirement plans, health care, dental coverage, group life insurance, short and long term disability plans, professional memberships and tuition fees.
(4) Automobile provided, no dollar amount included in other non-cash benefits.
(5) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (11.5 months and 2 weeks).
(6) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (10.5 months and 2 weeks).
(7) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (8.5 months and 3.5 months).
(8) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (11.5 months and 2 weeks).
(9) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (6.5 months and 5.5 months).
(10) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (8.5 months and 3.5 months).
(11) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (9 months and 3 months).
(12) New position created June 2016, no comparison for 2016.
(13) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (6 months and 3.5 months).
(14) New position created January 2017, no comparison for 2016.
(15) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (10 months and 2 months).
(16) Position was vacant for 5 months.
(17) Position was cost shared with another ministry for a portion of the year.
(18) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (8.5 months and 1 month). The position was vacant for 2.5 months.
(19) Position was occupied by two staff during the year (7 months and 2 months). The position was vacant for 3 months.
(20) Position title has been revised, position was previously reported as Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Communications and Engagement.
(21) Position title has been revised, position was previously reported as Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Communications and Marketing.
(22) Position title has been revised, position was previously reported as Executive Director, Finance and Administration.

Schedule 4

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS
Year ended March 31, 2017
(in thousands)

Related parties are those entities consolidated or accounted for on the modified equity basis in the Government of Alberta's financial statements. Related parties also include key management personnel in the ministry.

The ministry and its employees paid or collected certain taxes and fees set by regulation for premiums, licenses and other charges. These amounts were incurred in the normal course of business, reflect charges applicable to all users, and have been excluded from this schedule.

The ministry had the following transactions with related parties reported on the Statement of Operations and the Statement of Financial Position at the amount of consideration agreed upon between the related parties:

	Other Entities	
	2017	2016
Expenses - Directly Incurred		
Other Services	$ 375	$ 301
Receivable from Other Government Departments	$ 1	$ 11

The ministry also had the following transactions with related parties for which no consideration was exchanged. The amounts for these related party transactions are estimated based on the costs incurred by the service provider to provide the service. These amounts are not reported in the financial statements but are disclosed in Schedule 5.

	Other Entities	
	2017	2016 (Restated)
Expenses - Incurred by Others		
Accommodation	2,131	1,974
Business Services	881	934
Legal Services	160	275
Other Resources	1,614	1,295
	$ 4,786	$ 4,478

Schedule 5

MINISTRY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
ALLOCATED COSTS
Year ended March 31, 2017
(in thousands)

	2017						2016
	Expenses - Incurred by Others						
Program	Expenses[1]	Accommodation Costs[2]	Legal Services[3]	Business Services[4]	Other Resources[5]	Total Expenses	Total Expenses (Restated)
Office of the Premier/Executive Council	$ 15,676	$ 1,582	$ 142	$ 529	$ 470	$ 18,399	$ 18,187
Intergovernmental Relations	3,475	146	-	137	-	3,758	3,560
Public Affairs	6,677	403	18	215	1,144	8,457	7,867
	$ 25,828	$ 2,131	$ 160	$ 881	$ 1,614	$ 30,614	$ 29,614

(1) Expenses - Directly Incurred as per Statement of Operations.

(2) Accommodation Costs allocated by square footage.

(3) Legal Services Costs allocated by estimated costs incurred by each program.

(4) Business Services Costs, including charges for IT support, vehicles, internal audit services and other services, allocated by costs in certain programs.

(5) Other Resources include strategic communications services, FOIP support and seconded staff.

Annual Report Extracts and Other Statutory Reports

Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* requires the ministry to report annually on the following parts of the Act:

(a) The number of disclosures received by the designated officer of the Public Interest Disclosure Office, the number of disclosures acted on and the number of disclosures not acted on by the designated officer;
(b) The number of investigations commenced by the designated officer as a result of disclosures;
(c) In the case of an investigation that results in a finding of wrongdoing, a description of the wrongdoing and any recommendations made or corrective measures taken in relation to the wrongdoing or the reasons why no corrective measure was taken.

In 2015-16, there were no disclosures of wrongdoing filed with the Public Interest Disclosure Office.

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